

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

ACTION COPY

23

Action
ARA

CONFIDENTIAL

Control: 1458

Rec'd: August 4, 1954
3:05 p.m.

FROM: Guatemala City

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 157, August 4, 10 a.m.

NIACP

Reference DEFTTEL 126.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

AUG 11 1954

file jg

This Document Must Be Returned To
DC/R 714.00/8-454
Central
Files

Juan Cordova Cerna is potentially most mature adviser available to Castillo Armas with whom he was closely associated in MRILE movement and who appears to repose considerable trust in him. He has been mentioned as possible choice of Castillo forces for presidency when country returns to constitutionality and apparently for this reason has considered it inadvisable to be at forefront of political scene at present. Although it is difficult to assess extent his influence in present fluid situation, he undoubtedly carries weight with Castillo and his return with Department's first hand views would provide worthwhile re-enforcement our efforts here. He may be talked to frankly.

I would suggest telling him immediate problem as we see it is effective consolidation of Castillo power to provide framework in which our collaboration can become effective. Incidents of past two days should provide ample evidence of need to bring armed forces under Castillo's control not (repeat not) only by firm weeding out such unreliable officers but also by intelligent program of building up personal following in officer corps and of neutralizing bitterness which exists.

We also believe it essential for Castillo to impose discipline on civilian groups among his following. We were distressed during crisis of past two days to see their almost complete lack of coordination and while Castillo's vast popularity was amply demonstrated, his lack of organized support was glaring. At least ten delegations purporting to represent different anti-Communist groups within Castillo forces called at Embassy with differing plans ranging from renewal of civil war from Zacapa base to resignation of whole Junta, including Castillo, and their replacement by a civilian group. Various anti-Communist organizations were acting in undisciplined manner which tended defeat rather than help objective. It was clear from these events regime can achieve stability only when Castillo's popularity is transformed into organized support.

REVIEWED BY *Thurthe*

DATE 2/9/52

After immediate

PERMANENT

RECORD

COPY ☐ ~~TEXT~~ DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐DECLASSIFIED, RELEASE ☒RELEASE DENIED ☐

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

CONFIDENTIAL

REPRODUCTION FROM THIS
COPY, IF CLASSIFIED, IS
PROHIBITEDCONFIDENTIAL
FILED

HO

August 4, 1954, San Francisco, City

Castillo's problem is to consolidate regime is met
Castillo's problem will be primarily to hold popular base.
Castillo's assurances of consolidation and extension
of his gains have been welcomed, they need to be translated
into action as promptly as situation permits in order to pre-
vent reaction from being identified as retrogressive both
domestically and international scene. In this connection Depart-
ment may wish to discuss agrarian reform and labor program in
detail, suggesting to Domínguez Cerna that drawing up of new
agrarian reform law to remove some land distribution need not
depend on laws now in effect and prompt reorganization
of agrarian labor government should be genuinely and intel-
ligently encouraged to prevent workers from looking back on
Communist unions as or protectors of their rights. On
economic side if possible Department will want to emphasize what
we are able to help with Inter-American highway, technical aid,
but here again it should be emphasized this aid can be
used in strengthening Castillo regime only as supplement
to his own actions in consolidating military and civilian
support.

MURKIN

to Mr. Ledder (W-1) 4:20 p.m., 8/4/54. JAW.